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# Reagan replaces official in CIA

WASHINGTON [AP]—President Reagan has named career intelligence officer Robert M. Gates to replace Deputy CIA Director John N. McMahon, who reportedly opposed increased aid to paramilitary movements in Third World countries.

McMahon's resignation, announced late Tuesday, was hailed by two conservative lobbying groups that had called for his removal, claiming he had hampered Afghan rebels' efforts to overthrow the Soviet-installed government in Kabul.

McMahon, 56, a 34-year veteran of intelligence work, gave no explanation for his resignation other than to say in a letter to Reagan he had "reached a stage where I should move on."

The White House statement cited "personal reasons" for the deputy's departure, which is to be effective March 29.

But the Washington Post, quoting unidentified administration sources, said McMahon has opposed the Reagan administration's expansion of covert operations in Third World conflicts and decided to leave after an interagency group decided to escalate four paramilitary operations.

The Post's sources would not specify the countries involved but indicated that they were mentioned in recent administration statements. Those countries are Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola and Cambodia, the Post said.

McMahon was against increased U.S. involvement in Third World conflicts that he believed could not win long-term political support at home, the newspaper said. It described him as the agency's conscience.

There was no immediate explanation for the White House announcement Tuesday night, coming as it did after office hours and after reporters had been told there would be no further statements from the White House.

"It's a great breakthrough," said Andrew Eiva of the Federation for American-Afghan Action. Free the Eagle, another group, mounted a



John N. McMahon

direct-mail campaign against McMahon that generated 10,000 letters to White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan, said John Houston, the group's vice president.

Among other things, the groups blamed McMahon for holding up supplies of more effective weapons, including anti-aircraft missiles, to the Afghan rebels.

Gates, the Central Intelligence Agency's deputy director for intelligence and a specialist in Soviet and Eastern European affairs, has served two tours on the National Security Council staff as its intelligence chief.

Gates, 42, holds a doctoral degree from Georgetown University and has been associated with the CIA for 20 years, serving most of that time at the agency's headquarters in Langley, Va., just outside Washington.

In a letter dated Feb. 24 but not released until the resignation was announced, McMahon told Reagan, "With over 34 years in intelligence, I have reached a stage where I should move on."

McMahon offered praise for CIA Director William Casey, a former

Reagan campaign chairman who had not been associated with the intelligence community since World War II and has encountered some opposition within the CIA and on Capitol Hill since assuming the directorship five years ago.

He called Casey "a unique asset," who has brought wisdom, energy and leadership "that has provided our country with an intelligence capability second to none."

McMahon was nominated by Reagan to be deputy director on April 26, 1982, after Adm. Bobby Inman resigned. By most accounts, McMahon won the respect of the House and Senate oversight committees during his tenure in the No. 2 post, while Casey had an up-and-down relationship with Congress.

Before the promotion, McMahon had held the agency's No. 3 post—executive director. During his lifelong career at the agency, McMahon had helped run the U-2 spy plane program and later managed the agency's spy network.